

Salvation for a Call



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Thrust statement: Salvation is available to anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord.

Scripture reading: Romans 10:11-17

What does it mean to call upon the name of the Lord? Paul cites [Joel 2:32](#) to illustrate from the Old Testament that in the messianic age, salvation is available to all who call upon Him. Salvation is not limited to the Jews only, but rather salvation is offered to all nations. Just as God has not limited salvation to the Jews only, neither has He limited salvation to certain individuals. For Paul, salvation is available to “everyone” who calls upon the name of the Lord. In other words, Salvation is offered for a call. Have you called upon the name of the Lord for salvation? If you want salvation from condemnation, then you must call upon the name of the Lord. If you want freedom from God’s wrath, then you must call upon the name of the Lord. Salvation is not based on works of the Law, but rather, on faith. Salvation is in and through Jesus.

Paul says that the Lord “richly blesses all who call on him” ([Romans 10:12](#)).^[1] Do you want to be richly blessed, then you must call upon the name of the Lord. Again, Paul writes, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” ([10:13](#)). The Greek text is especially strong in regards to one’s calling upon the Lord. Paul says, “everyone” (πᾶς, *pas*) and “whoever” (ὅς ᾧ, *hos an*) calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. The Jews wanted to limit salvation only to the fleshly descendants of Abraham. The Jews could see no salvation outside of certain liturgies and human elbow grease. For Paul, salvation is experienced only on the principle of faith, not works of the law. Paul calls attention to the Jews’ concept of salvation in his epistle to Rome: Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes ([Romans 10:1-4](#)).

Paul zeros in on the righteousness of God that is available “for everyone who believes” (10:4). The Jews did not submit themselves to God’s righteousness made available through faith in Jesus, but rather they sought to accomplish their own righteousness through Law compliance. Paul calls for reflection on the fact that redemption is through faith and confession, not through law conformity. In this same chapter (10), Paul speaks of the faith that believes and the faith that confesses: “for it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved” (10:10). Having set forth the principle of right standing before God, he proceeds to explain: “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (10:13). God accepts all upon Gospel terms: “As the Scripture says, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame” (10:11). The Greek text is: “everyone believing on him will not be put to shame” (πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ, *pas ho pisteuon ep’ auto*) In other words, it is ask and have.

URGENCY OF THE CALL FOR SALVATION

Earlier, the question was asked: What does it mean to call upon the name of the Lord? The word *call* signifies “to make an appeal.” For instance, Paul employed the word *call* in his appeal to Caesar: “If, however, I am guilty of doing anything deserving death, I do not refuse to die. But if the charges brought against me by these Jews are not true, no one has the right to hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!” (Acts 25:11). For the believer, to call upon the name of the Lord is to confess one’s distance from God and to appeal to Him for mercy. If you have not appealed to God for mercy, then there is still distance between you and God.

Remember the words Isaiah wrote concerning the distance of Israel from God: “But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear” (Isaiah 59:2). Is it any wonder that everyone must call upon the name of the Lord? While it is true that everyone is at a distance from God, yet everyone should remember that God is not far from us. It is in this vein that Paul says, “From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17:26-27).

Because God is “not far from each one of us,” then men/women should seek Him, reach out to Him, and find Him. Do you want to close this distance? Then, you must call upon the name of the Lord. You must believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that “Jesus is Lord” if you want to close the distance between you and God (Romans 10:8-11).

As stated earlier, the words in our text (Romans 10:13) is cited by Paul from Joel 2:32. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, also appeals to the words of Joel in order to draw attention to the urgency of this salvation that is available to anyone who wishes to have eternal life (Acts 2:21). If you wish to possess eternal life, then you must repent of your sins and confess the name of Jesus and submit to baptism into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). Paul says that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). As one looks at the law of God, the law shuts everyone’s mouth.

Paul captures this plight of man in his letter to Roman Christians: “Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth

may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God” (3:19). Everyone is guilty and held accountable to God. Thus God devised a way for man’s dilemma. Paul sets forth the answer in this epistle. Listen to God’s method of dealing with man’s sin problem: “God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus” (Romans 3:25-26).

If one does not believe in Him, then the “sacrifice of atonement” does not deal with his/her sin problem. In other words, one is still under the curse of the Law. If one is not in Christ, then everyone is guilty, everyone is under the wrath of God (Romans 5), everyone is under the dominion of sin (Romans 6), everyone is under law (Romans 7), and everyone is under condemnation (Romans 8). Thus, Paul concludes: “Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin” (Romans 3:20). Can one escape the wrath of God? Can one escape the dominion of sin? Can one escape the curse of the Law? Can one escape condemnation? Is there any hope? Yes, there is! The answer is found in one’s calling upon the Lord.

Paul, having painted one of the most dreadful conditions of humanity, employs two of the greatest words in all of the English language—“but now.” Listen to Paul as he captures the wonder of it all: “But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe” (3:21). Paul began this epistle by calling attention to the glorious gospel: “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith” (Romans 1:16-17). The “good news” is that God has made available His righteousness through faith. Paul says that it is for “everyone who believes.”

Have you ever sounded out this call of distance? The Scriptures sound forth the urgency of this call: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts” (Hebrews 3:7-8). The author of Hebrews attributed this saying to the Holy Spirit (8:7). In fact, the Hebrew writer cites from the Psalms and attributes this quotation to the Holy Spirit. This particular Psalm that the Hebrew author quotes warns the children of Israel: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah” (Psalms 95:7-8). Do you wish to close the distance between you and God? If so, then “do not harden your hearts.” Today is the day of salvation. Everyone must heed the invitation put forth by John as he concludes his book on the revelation of Jesus Christ: “The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life” (Revelation 22:17).

THE UNIQUENESS OF THIS SALVATION

The uniqueness of God’s salvation is that it is available on terms that anyone can understand and receive. When Paul wrote to the churches in the province of Galatia, he called attention to the uniqueness of Abraham’s right standing before God. Paul drives home the point of Abraham’s justification and theirs:

Consider Abraham: “He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith ([Galatians 3:6-9](#)).

Do you want salvation? Again, the words of Paul are appropriate to cite: “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” ([Romans 10:13](#)). One cannot help but recall the words of the angel’s announcement about the birth of Jesus: “She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins” ([Matthew 1:21](#)). Again, I ask, do you want salvation? In your answer to this question, consider the story of Cornelius the centurion who also wanted salvation. An angel of God appeared to Cornelius—a man who was devout and God fearing ([Acts 10:2](#))—and informed Cornelius to send men to Joppa and call for Peter. After Peter’s arrival at the home of Cornelius, Peter, after the preliminaries, delivered a message about redemption. In the proclamation of the good news of God, he said, “All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name” ([10:43](#)).

CONCLUSION

The Scriptures speak of the universality of salvation. Paul says, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” ([Romans 10:13](#)). This invitation extends to all. Jesus told Nicodemus: “**For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son**” ([John 3:16-18](#)).

John records another conversation of Jesus with the crowds. Some wanted to know, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” ([John 6:28](#)). Jesus responded by saying, “**The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent**” ([6:29](#)). Do you want to do the works required by God? Then, I encourage you to believe in the One He has sent. Do not forget the words of Simon Peter in his response to the Lord’s question about their faithfulness: “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God” ([John 6:68-69](#)).

Message Delivered
at the Following
Congregations

Oakwood Hills Church
DeFuniak Springs, FL
Date: 7-4-1999
Time: 11 am
Present: 68

[\[1\]](#) All Scripture citations are from *The New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House) 1984.